

Message Text

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71

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 /093 W

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R 090838Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1948

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 166

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT KS

SUBJECT: REACTION TO EMERGENCY MEASURES

1. ROK PRESS JANUARY 9 HAS HEADLINED PRESIDNET PARK'S EMERGENCY MEASURES. TEXTS OF MEASURES AND PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL STATEMENT HAVE APPEARED ON FRONT PAGES, ALONG WITH PARAPHRASING OF PARK'S RATIONALE IN SUPPORT OF HIS ACTION. PRESS ALSO HAS REPORTED PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS TO COURTS-MARTIAL AND MEASURES BEING TAKEN BY POLICE TO DETECT VIOLATORS OF THE EMERGENCY MEASURES.

2. AFTERNOON PAPERS CARRY COMMENTS OF STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN IN WASHINGTON. (SEPTTEL)

3. WHILE ALL MEDIA HAVE GIVEN MASSIVE ATTENTION TO THE MEASURES, TREATMENT HAS BEEN UNIVERSALLY CAUTIOUS AND STERILE. ONLY ANALYSES OFFERED HAVE ADHERED CLOSELY TO THE PRESIDENT'S OWN STATEMENT. SO FAR NO OTHER POLITICAL COMMENTING HAS APPEARED OUTSIDE OF PREDICTABLE SEOUL SINMUN EDITORIAL.

4. MEDIA REPORTED INSTANT ENDORSEMENT BY DRP
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AND YUJONGHOE SPOKESMEN, WHO PLEDGED FULL

SUPPORT FOR THE PRESIDENT AND CALLED HIS ACTION NECESSARY AND INEVITABLE. SILENCE OF OPPOSITION WAS BROKEN JANUARY 9 BY NDP AND DUP CALL FOR IMMEDIATE OPENING OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. NDP SPOKESMAN ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT HIS PARTY WILL CONTINUE TO WORK FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, ACCORDING TO RADIO REPORT. NO REFERENCE WAS MADE TO CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

5. COMMENT:. FOR PRESENT PRESS IS INTERPRETING EMERGENCY MEASURES AS PROHIBITING EVERYTHING BUT BARE FACTUAL REPORTING EVEN OF POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OTHER THAN CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION. SENIOR POLICE OFFICER HAS INDICATED TO US THAT SPECIFIC GUIDELINES ON HANDLING OF PRESS HAVE NOT YET BEEN DISSEMINATED. HOWEVER, INITIAL INDICATIONS ARE THAT ENFORCEMENT WILL BE FIRM. GIVEN THIS AND BROAD SCOPE OF EMERGENCY MEASURES, PRESS CAUTION IS UNDERSTANDABLE AND PRUDENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW, GOVERNMENT REFORM, PRESIDENT, PRESS COMMENTS, SPEECHES, COURTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SEOUL00166
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740153/aaaabycz.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 JUL 2002 by worrelsw>; APPROVED <20 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REACTION TO EMERGENCY MEASURES
TAGS: PINT, KS, (PARK)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005